VALLEY FREE PRESS

THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S
GAY & LESBIAN OPINION / NEWSPAPER

VOL. 3 NO. 2 MARCH 2000

PA-GALA REPORTS:

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY EVERY GLBT REGISTERED DEMOCRAT IN LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES WILL BE ABLE TO VOTE FOR AN OPENLY GAY CANDIDATE.

We all must go to the polls and elect Steve Black as delegate to the Democratic Convention, we must vote for the other candidates that support us, we must vote, so that all members of the GLBT community can identify themselves as a super-voters who vote in every election. See more voter info on page 7. And when you get your PA-GALA voter's guide in the mail, use it!

AIR PRODUCTS TO MATCH FUNDS RAISED AT STONEWALL BENEFIT FOR GLBT@VYH

The Stonewall is hosting a fund raiser show featuring some of the areas most popular drag performers, on Sunday, March 19, at 10pm ($5.00 cover), for the GLBT youth program at Valley Youth House. Air Products will match what is raised, up to $3000. There will be dancing after the show. Come out and financially support GLBT @ VYH while having some fun. And give Air Products a good run for their money!

ADVOCATE EDITOR TO SPEAK AT MUHLENBERG MARCH 16

Michelangelo Signorile, Editor at Large of the national gay news magazine the Advocate, will speak at Muhlenberg College on Thursday, March 16 at 7:30 pm in the Trumbower Bldg. rm. 130. This presentation has been organized by the student organization BGLA (Bisexual, Gay, and Lesbian Advocates). The talk is free and open to the public.

UPDATE ON DISCRIMINATION INCIDENT AT LOCAL BORDERS BOOKS

SEE PAGE 6

Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the basis of: race, color, religion,national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, handicap or disability, marital status, family status, age, use of a guide animal, sexual orientation, or transgender status, and asks that organizations which request VFP to publish information about their events maintain a similar policy against discrimination.

COMMUNITY COMES OUT FOR PRIDE!!!

About forty people converged on the UUCLV Church community room in February in an unprecedented show of support and commitment to make this year's Lehigh Valley Pride Festival the best, biggest, and most inclusive ever. Representatives from PA-GALA, VFP, GLEE, GLOSS, PFLAG, EQUAL, MCC, WDIY, UUCLV, ASC, GLASS, LVGMC, GLORA, RENAISSANCE, NCC, GLISN, ACCO, and others just wishing to volunteer were there. The actual name of the organization will now be **Pride of the Lehigh Valley : Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgendered together.**

Pride members voted for a reorganization of the Pride Board. Rather than a President, four Co-Chairs were elected to take on the leadership of the various committees. The new Co-Chairs are; Terry Richline, Ed Verba, Denise McKelvey and Allyson Hamm. Also a new Secretary, and Treasurer were elected. Micki Katz was re-elected Board Member at Large in charge of organizing the Pride Parade, and several other volunteers came forward to head important committees.

To become involved with one of the committees or to just volunteer to help, phone the Pride Line at 610-770-6200 or email Pride at the new address <pridelv@hotmail.com>. A general interest meeting for all those interested in volunteering will be held March 15, 7pm, at UUCLV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem.

One of the goals of this year's Festival is to greatly expand the number and variety of vendors and other activities on the field. If you are a vendor, or know of a GLBT-friendly vendor who would like to have a booth at the festival, call or email Pride now. The entertainment committee also requests that performers interested in being part of the Festival contact Pride.

FESTIVAL DATE JUNE 17

This year's Pride Organizers have declared the week previous to the Festival, **Pride Week**. The Festival itself will be Saturday, June 17, from noon to 6pm, at Cedar Beach Park, in Allentown. Lehigh Valley GLBT organizations have already begun to fill the week with their specially scheduled events, additional to their participation in the festival.

If your organization wants to host a special Pride themed event during the week, or if your group already has an event planned for this period and wants to be listed as part of the GLBT Pride Celebration (and take advantage of collective advertising, media coverage and community energy), contact Pride at 610-770-6200 or email <pridelv.hotmail.com>.

PRIDE WEEK EVENTS (So far)

Saturday June 10	Sunday June 11	Monday June 12	Tuesday June 13	Wednesday June 14	Thursday June 15	Friday June 16	Saturday June 17	Sunday June 18
GAY MEN'S CHORUS CONCERT	PFLAG "PRIDE PARENTS" MCC PRIDE SERVICE			PRIDE FILM NIGHT			PRIDE FESTIVAL	FACT SUMMER SOLSTICE DINNER WILL BE THE NEXT WEEKEND →

PLANET Parenthood

edited by Emily Dugan

Parenting with will and grace

In our never-ending quest to raise our two daughters in a "normal yet gay" household, my partner and I try to do several "family-oriented" activities each week. Years ago, the activity with our older daughter, approximately nine at the time, was to watch "Ellen" and explain the importance of the show and why everyone should watch it. She would sit there and watch it with us every week, seemingly enjoying it and, so we thought, understanding it. Our younger daughter, who was six at the time, missed this activity because of bedtime rules. Years later, last summer to be exact, when we were almost thrown out of an "artistic trapeze show" at the Kennedy Center because she could not get beyond one of the men in the act wearing a tutu to "express himself," we were not sure whether adhering to her bedtime, several years before did her (or us) a disservice. Following this disruption to all those around us at the trapeze show, we thought we had failed as gay parents. What child of gay parents has a difficult time understanding why a man might want to wear a tutu? Not ours--or so we had thought.

Two weeks ago, one of the family activities of the week was to watch the "historic" episode of "Will and Grace," and this time, both girls, now eight and eleven, were allowed to watch. We watched the entire episode and both seemed to understand it and also enjoy the humor in it. When it was over, the younger daughter--who has either missed out on or just didn't understand similar themes in the past--brushed her teeth and said, "I like that show, it's funny" on her way to bed, not giving the show or the kiss much thought. Her response was almost as if this was an everyday occurrence--no big deal, nothing out of the ordinary. The older one, who has had a lot more experience with gay issues and who, we assumed, had a pretty good understanding of things--making us successes as gay parents--brushed her teeth and went to bed. But on her way to bed, her response was, "You and Mom don't kiss do you?" When I said, "Yes," she replied, "Oh, I never saw you kiss--I just thought you loved each other."

Well, you can imagine my surprise and disappointment at this question. We had failed, again, to get our children to understand the importance of our and other gay relationships. After all of the discussions about how you should be able to love and marry whomever you choose without worrying about laws, benefits, rights, bigotry, etc., how could our "well-informed" older daughter have asked such a question? But then I gave the evening's proceedings some more thought. Had we really failed as gay parents? Was it such a bad thing that she knew we loved each other and wanted to spend our lives together? Had we failed, even though she thinks we should get married because we love each other and want our children to know that we are committed to each other and to them for the rest of our lives? Isn't that what those of us who fight for equality or just want to live in a world where we hope to be treated with dignity and respect wish for? So, maybe we hadn't failed as gay parents after all. Our younger daughter didn't cause a scene or make any gagging noises when Will and Jack kissed. She acted like it was nothing out of the ordinary. And our older daughter thinks we live together and raise a family together because we love each other and want to spend the rest of our lives together. Aren't these the things that basically we hope to teach the rest of the world in our lifetime? So, I guess we haven't failed at being gay parents after all, and if everyone else could take the sexual aspect out of gay relationships and treat them as an everyday, normal occurrence as our daughters have, what a beautiful world this would be--the world we all hope to live in someday soon, if not in our lifetimes, then hopefully, with the help of our daughters, in theirs.

Emily Dugan thanks this month's guest Planet Parenthood columnist and encorages other parents to send VFP articles about raising kids in the GLBT community.

RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

Dear Denise,

Like most Americans, I feel I pay too much in taxes. What can you suggest?

Signed, **Tired of Paying**.

Dear **Tired of Paying**,

Retirement plans are a great way to reduce your taxable income. Depending on the type of company or organization that employs you, you may have access to a 401K plan, Tax Sheltered Custodial or Annunity plan or possibly a Profit Sharing Plan. If you are self employed, you may want to begin your own Simple IRA plan, Traditional IRA, Roth IRA or some combination. You have several options, what's best for you depends on your own situation.

Consider now how you want to pay your taxes in the future. Retirement Plans have "Qualified Assets." Assets that you generally would not want to access until retirement or possibly the purchase of a new home. The benefit of owning "Qualified Assets" is that they continue to grow, tax-deferred until you withdraw them. The exception being a Roth IRA. Basically, if you allow money to remain in a Roth IRA until you are 59 1/2 and the money has been there for at least 5 years, you have the ability to withdraw it and not pay any taxes until a future time. Because it is very hard to determine what your taxable income rate will be in 10 to 30 years , managing your taxable income is an ongoing process .

Begin to worry less about the amount of your refund, instead, concentrate on not paying out those taxes to begin with, so that you can invest that money now and have it working for you. Since Tax Rules change annuallly, seek the advice of a tax consultant who fully understands your life situation. Sharing your life and assets with a partner creates a tax situation very different from single people or those who are legally married. A tax consultant may be able to provide you with different options. Perhaps , you should itemize your deductions, refinance your auto debt with a home equity loan, or increase the amount that you contribute to your retirement plan. The Pros & Cons of these need careful scrutiny. What you do in one aspect of your financial life, affects other areas. You should begin to look at your finances from an overall standpoint.

PFLAG NEWS

This month's PFLAG meeting will feature students from several area colleges as part of a youth panel. The meeting will be held March 12, at 3 pm, at Northampton Community College in the Student Center, room 134 (park in lots A or C) For further information or directions call: 610-967-5219. The Reading PFLAG meeting dates have been changed to Thursdays. The next meeting will be March 16. Call for additional information.

GLBT@VYH UPDATE

Members of the Valley Youth House GLBT teen program, that just started up in January, are already planning their first social / fund raiser event. It's a retro dance party for local high schoolers, called "Over the Rainbow and Into the 80's." Date: April 1st, Place: UUCLV, in Bethlehem; Time: 6-10pm; Admission: $5.00 (refreshments included).

GLBT@VYH meets every Tuesday at Valley Youth House at 524 Walnut St. in Allentown, from 6pm to 8pm. Most meetings are well attended, with a fairly even mix of young men and women. Attendees must be high school age. For information call 610-432-6481.

HOT NEWS

GLOSS EVENTS

The next GLOSS (Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society) Game Night will be Saturday, March 18 at 7pm. Food and drinks will be provided, a $5 contribution is appreciated. Feel free to bring a guest, and a favorite game.

GLOSS also announces a special dance weekend event organized for the GLBT community to be held at a Poconos resort. While this is not a GLOSS sponsored event, you can get more information on it, or directions to the GLOSS Game night by contacting GLOSS at <fabio@early.com>, or at 610-434-2966.

LOCAL FILM FIGHTS HIV

The Allentown Health Bureau is pleased to invite friends and community to the grand premiere of our locally filmed HIV prevention video called FEVER. FEVER was filmed in Allentown with many familiar faces helping us to address the ongoing issue of how to prevent HIV infection among those we love.

The premiere will be Thursday April 6, at Lehigh Valley Hospital, 17th & Chew Sts, School of Nursing Auditorium. Refreshments will be served from 5:30pm to 6:15pm and the video will be shown at 6:15 pm. It is about a half hour in length.

Those interested in attending should RSVP by 3/31 to Sheri Hilt at 610-437-7577 or email kistler@allentowncity.org. Many scenes for this video were shot at the Lehigh Valley Pride Festival, the Stonewall and familiar locations.

GMLV SCHEDULE

Up coming events for the GMLV (Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley) include: March 11 - Film Night; March 25 - Game Night. Bring your favorite game. April 8 - Film Night. "Green Plaid Shirt." April 22 - Game Night. GMLV meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday evening of the month at 7pm. Meetings are held at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Center St., Bethlehem. Refreshments are provided. A donation of one dollar is requested at each meeting.

GAY MEN'S CHORUS 1ST CD

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus announces the opportunity to help support the production of the chorus' first CD recording. To contact the LVGMC about individual or corporate sponsorship to underwrite part of the CD production, call 610-366-3320 or email <steveo@early.com>.

CONFERENCE ON GENDER

Lehigh Valley Renaissance and PFLAG of the Lehigh Valley invites you to a "Leadership Conference on Gender." This important event will be held Saturday, March 11, from 1 to 4 pm. It will deal with issues about gender, gender identity, and the transgender community. All members of the GLBT community are welcome. The conference will be held at the Lutheran Brotherhood Building, 1013 Brookside Drive, Wescosville. (Directions: From Hamilton Blvd., go south on Brookside Drive, at second left, building is on the right. 2nd Floor Conference Rm. RSVP to 610-797-7969 or <RenLV@ren.org> or 610-967-5219 or <kohneng@voicenet.com>.

PA-GALA LOBBYING DAY

SPARC, a state-wide coalition of GLBT groups, will sponsor a rally in Harrisburg on April 12. PA-GALA will co-ordinate a Hate-Crimes Bill lobbying day in conjunction with this event.The entire state GLBT community is encouraged to come to Harrisburg to be part of this effort. PA-GALA will provide each attendee with the name and office number of their Representative, so that participants can lobby their Reps to support the Hate-Crimes Bill.

THEATRE OUTLET PLAY

Theatre Outlet in Allentown continues its Millennium Mainstage Season with the Valley Premiere of Valley Song, by award winning African Playwright Athol Fugard, through March 19. James Symmons directs Simone Copeland, Jay Lowman, and Michael Adams in this remarkable play. For performance times and ticket prices call T.O. at 610-820-9270, or email <theatreo@aol.com>.

GLORA EVENTS

Upcoming events from GLORA (Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown are: Sunday March 12 : bowling at Bowlorama in Reading. Even if you don't bowl, come out and cheer. If you can't make it for the bowling, join GLORA for dinner afterward. Sunday March 25 is the fifth annual lesbian video night in Allentown. Gay men may be arranging a movie night of their own.

For details and directions contact GLORA at <GLORAinPA@aol.com> or write to GLORA at PO Box 1952, Allentown, PA 18105-1952 to become a member and receive their monthly newsletter for the most up to date information about activities and events.

GLISN SOCIAL EVENTS

GLSIN of Dunn and Bradstreet announce the following (open to the public) social events. Friday March 24: Movie: "Beautiful Thing," shown in Prosser Auditorium at Moravian College. General Admission $2.00.

Lehigh University will perform Oscar Wilde's, "The Importance of Being Earnest," at the Zoellner Arts Center on April 27,28,29th at 8:00pm, on April 30 at 2:00pm and on May 3,4,5 at 8:00pm. Tickets are $10.00. For information call 610-758-2787.

PRIDE RADIO INTERVIEW

Pride of the Lehigh Valley Board Member Micki Katz, who is in charge of this year's Pride Parade, was interviewed by WDIY's Lehigh Valley Discourse host, Bjorn Olsen , about this year's Pride Festival and Parade plans. The program aired Wednesday, March 8 at 6pm. Tune in to WDIY at 88.1FM in Allentown and Bethlehem and at 93.9 FM in Easton and Phillipsburg.

ASC "DINING FOR FRIENDS"

"Dining For Friends" allows the Lehigh Valley to come together on Sat. May 6, for a unique and exciting evening consisting of individual dinner parties held at homes across the Lehigh Valley and a "Finale Event" which includes a silent auction, music and refreshments. The funds raised benefit the clients of AIDS Services Center. Dinners can be fancy, formal or casual. You provide the dinner, atmosphere and guests. We will provide you with invitations inviting your guests to make a donation to help provide HIV/AIDS services in our community. To register as a Dinner Host or for more information call 610-974-8701.

UUCLV EVENTS

Upcoming Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley events include: Friday, March 10, at 8 p.m. Concert by the Dave Roper Trio, followed by a reception. Donation:$12 adult, $6 student, children free, (child care). Saturday, March 18, at 7 p.m. Sober City Cafe -- an evening of music, fun and food presented by the Senior High Group. Friday, March 24, at 8 p.m. Vegas-style Casino Party. Authentic gambling equipment and games. Cost: $15 person (includes "$5,000" playing chips),(child care). Wednesday, March 29: Sierra Club program, "Ecological Footprints: Sprawl and Habitat Loss.". Slide presentation and discussion. Saturday, April 15: Service Auction 2000. Silent and sign-up auctions at 5 p.m., chili dinner at 5:30 p.m. (kids' auction during dinner), live auction at 7 p.m. The UUCLV Church is at 424 Center St. in Bethlehem.

ONLY PAID PA-GALA MEMBERS GOT THIS ISSUE OF VFP IN THE MAIL. JOIN PA-GALA TO GET A SUBSCRIPTION.

CALENDAR

ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women, Rehearsals, Thursdays 7-10pm at UUCLV Bethlehem, 610.760.1759
AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley - 610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/lvaids
ASC- AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay &Lesbian Book Club, White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm.
Enigma Players 610-432-0706
EQUAL! at Lucent Technologies 610.712.5532
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
GMBG- Gay Men's Buddist Group- Meditation and discussion, 610-776-1768
GLEE at Air Products
GLASS- at Lehigh Univ. Every other Thursday 6pm, 2nd fl. Lamberton Hall, 610.758.3469
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, various dates) Newsletter- The Tassle. Write to: P.O. Box 1952, Allentown PA18105-1952, email- GLORAinPA@AOL.COM
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O.Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 Volleyball,. Tennis, Racquet Ball . 610.434.2966.
GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd and 4th Saturday Monthly 7pm UUCLV, Bethlehem, 610.820.0977.
Integrity- Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians Family and Friends 1st Monday each month 7pm Trinity Episcopal Church 2nd Floor Chapel, 44 E. Market Street Bethlehem. 610-758-8642
KS-Kindred Spirits- Support, discussion, and social group for lesbians and bisexual women Fridays at 6:30pm, Contact : Chris at 610-868-0248
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, Rehearsals Tuesdays, UUCLV Bethlehem. 610.366.3320, steveo@early.com
MS - Moravian Sanctuary, PO Box 5053, Bethlehem, PA 10815.
MCC - Metropolitan Community Church, office-424 Center St. (UUCLV), Bethlehem, 6 pm Sundays, 610.954.7775
NCC- Northampton Community College Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Student Union, Meetings every Monday fron 4pm to 6pm at CC114 (Cohen Lounge),, College Center call 610.861.5541(#1386) or 882-2531
NEPATA-NorthEast PA Transgender Assoc see Renaissance
NCFM- New Covenant Family Ministries, Sundays, 11am, Open Space Gallery, 610-791-0716 /740-3097, email NCFM98@aol.com
PA-GALA - PA Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action, (Voter's Information Booklet, and Political Lobbying) 1st Tuesdays, Monthly P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610.432.5449
PFLAG - LV Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 2nd Sundays 3pm 610.967.5219
Philadelphia Gay and Lesbian Film Festival - Various locations and dates in July. 215.790.1510.
Pride - Pride of the Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 2nd Tues. of the Month P.O. Box 20804 Lehigh Valley, 18002 610.770.6200
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs., Episcopal Church 16th and Turner, Allentown.

MARCH 2000

BE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE BY MARCH 6!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	LAST DAY TO REGISTER		1	2 T.O.	3 GAY MEN'S	4 CHORUS GLOSS
5 GLOSS NCFM UUCLV WDIY	6 RAA INTEGRITY	7 LVGMC GLOSS PA-GALA GLBT @ VYH GLBT Marti Gras	8	9 ACCO RAA GLOSS	10 ACCO GAY MEN'S KS GENDER	11 GMLV WDIY CHORUS GLORA CONFERENCE
12 GLOSS UUCLV NCFM MCC FACT P-FLAG	13 RAA	14 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	15 PRIDE	16 SIGNORILE ACCO RAA GLOSS	17 KS	18 GLOSS WDIY UUCLV
19 UUCLV NCFM MCC GLOSS WDIY ACCO	20	21 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	22	23 ACCO RAA GLOSS	24 GLISN KS UUCLV	25 GMLV GLORA GLOSS WDIY
26 UUCLV MCC NCFM WDIY GLOSS MS	27 RAA	28 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	29 UUCLV	30 ACCO RAA GLOSS	31 KS	

APRIL 2000

PRIMARY ELECTION ON THE 4TH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
VOTE for Steve Black						1 GLBT @ VYH TEEN DANCE
2 GLOSS NCFM UUCLV WDIY	3 RAA INTEGRITY	4 Primary Election Vote!!!	5	6 ACCO RAA GLOSS HIV FILM	7 KS	8 GMLV FILM WDIY GLOSS
9 GLOSS UUCLV NCFM MCC P-FLAG	10 RAA	11 GLOSS LVGMC PRIDE GLBT @ VYH	12 RALLY PA-GALA LOBBY DAY	13 ACCO RAA GLOSS	14 ACCO CONCERT KS	15 GLOSS WDIY UUCLV AUCTION
16 UUCLV MCC NCFM GLOSS WDIY	17 RAA	18 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	19	20 PASSOVER ACCO GLOSS RAA	21 KS	22 GMLV GLOSS WDIY
23 GLOSS NCFM MCC EASTER WDIY GLOSS 30	24 RAA	25 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	26	27 RAA GLOSS ACCO CONCERT	28 KS	29 GLOSS WDIY

MAY 2000

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 INTEGRITY	2 PA-GALA GLBT @ VYH GLOSS LVGMC	3	4 ACCO RAA GLOSS	5 KS	6 WDIY GLOSS
7 GLOSS UUCLV MCC WDIY NCFM	8 RAA	9 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	10	11 ACCO RAA GLOSS	12 KS	13 GMLV GLOSS WDIY
14 GLOSS UUCLV NCFM MCC PFLAG- Mother's Day	15 RAA	16 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	17	18 ACCO RAA GLOSS	19 KS	20 GLOSS WDIY
21 UUCLV MCC NCFM GLOSS WDIY	22 RAA	23 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	24	25 ACCO GLOSS RAA	26 KS	27 GMLV GLOSS WDIY
28 GLOSS NCFM MCC WDIY	29 RAA	30 GLOSS LVGMC GLBT @ VYH	31	ACCO RAA GLOSS	KS	GLOSS WDIY

Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., PO Box 3624 Allentown, PA 18016 610- 821- 2955 renlv @ ren.org
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG- 610.488.7533or 670.8029
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.3469
Saint John's Lutheran Church- A welcoming, gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown 610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamonz, 610.865.1028
SC- Susquehanna Camping Club- 503 General Sutter Ave. Lititz, PA 17543, www.paonline.com/outdoors
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29 Nth 9th St, Allentown, 610-820-9270.
TST- Touchstone Theatre, 321 E. 4th St. Beth. 610-867-1689, touchstone@nni.com
TriangleInterests- Lesbian Network and Credit Union 215.487.3736... 215.508.1616 email TIFCU@aol.com www.TRIANGLEINTERESTS.org
Unity- 26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VFP - Valley Free Press 610.432.5449
WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Saturday 7:30 pm Assorted Women, Sunday 6:30pm- This Way Out (sponsored by Equal at Lucent) 610.694.8100

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

T.O. VALLEY SONG - MARCH 2-19
GAY MEN'S CHORUS SOME ENCHANTED EVENING MARCH 10-12
UBAKA HILL & ACCO - MARCH 10-11
GMLV FILM NITE - MARCH 11
CONFERENCE ON GENDER - MARCH 11
PFLAG - MARCH 12
FACT ART AUCTION - MARCH 12
SIGNORILE AT MUHLENBERG - MARCH 16
GLOSS GAME NIGHT - MARCH 18
SOBER CITY CAFE AT UUCLV - MARCH 18
GLISN - MOVIE NIGHT - MARCH 24
UUCLV - VEGAS NIGHT - MARCH 24
GMLV GAME NIGHT - MARCH 25
GLORA LESBIAN FILM NIGHT - MARCH 25
UUCLV - SIERRA CLUB - MARCH 29
GLBT@VYH DANCE PARTY - APRIL 1
PRIMARY ELECTION - APRIL 4
AHD HIV FILM - APRIL 6
GMLV FILM NIGHT - APRIL 8
SPARC RALLY - PA-GALA LOBBY DAY APRIL 12

GLBT@VYH TEEN GROUP EVERY TUESDAY

THE INFORMATION IN THIS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL TO CONFIRM. PLEASE LET US LIST YOUR EVENT. WE WILL PUBLISH ARTICLES ABOUT LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ARE OF SERVICE OR INTEREST TO THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY, FREE OF CHARGE. PLEASE CONTACT VFP - 610-432-5449.

ACC♀ PRESENTS UBAKA HILL, AND OTHER CONCERTS

ACCO, (A Chorus Celebrating Women,) will sponsor high-energy drumming workshops and a performance by nationally-known percussionist and recording artist Ubaka Hill. Workshops are Friday, March 10, from 7pm-9pm, and Saturday, March 11, 3pm-5pm. The "Dance the Spiral Dance" concert will begin at 7pm. at Sayre Hall, The Cathedral Church of the Nativity at 321 Wyandotte St., in Bethlehem. For further information and ticket prices call ACCO at 610-760-1759.

ACCO's Godfrey Daniel's Concert is on April 14th at 7:30 pm. Among old favorites and new tunes you'll hear several pieces known as the "bomba," from Southern Puerto Rico. Historically, the "bomba" began when slaves from different haciendas gathered for special occasions. The "bomba" has continued to be a way for community to gather to dance, drum, and sing. Come and enjoy. Bring your own rhythm instrument. Purchase tickets at Godfrey Daniels Coffee House in South Bethlehem, 610-867-2390.

ACCO will join the Northeast Middle School singers in their spring concert on April 27 at 7:30pm. ACCO and NMS collaborated in an intergenerational project known as "Musical Design for Racial Justice." ACCO commissioned Ysaye Barnwell, of "Sweet Honey in the Rock," to compose original pieces from texts written by three NMS eighth graders. ACCO members and NMS staff and students will interact with Dr. Barnwell, on April 26th, during the final performance rehearsal.

FACT TO HAVE ART AUCTION FUND RAISER

The Third Annual "Auction of Fine Art, " benefiting FACT (Fighting AIDS Continuously Together), will be held on March 12, at the Allentown Hilton, 904 Hamilton St. Wine, cheese, coffee and dessert, and a preview of the Art begin at 7pm. The auction begins at 8pm. Admission is $20. Complimentary parking. Door Prize. For reservations and information call 610-437-6433, tickets may be purchased at the door.

Crocodile Rock will host a benefit for FACT on March 30 from 7-9pm. Cover charge ($10,) includes a buffet and reduced price drinks. Entrance after 9pm, for live band entertainment (but after the buffet), is $5.

LEHIGH VALLEY GAY MEN'S CHORUS

LVGMC ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT FIRSTS

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus will perform, "Some Enchanted Evening," a one hour review of the music of Rodgers and Hammerstein, at Odette's Cabaret , in New Hope, on March 10, 11 (8 p.m.) and 12 (7:30 p.m.). Tickets are $15.00 per person. Reservations can be made by calling Odette's at 215-862-2432.

June 10 and 11, 2000 will be a special weekend in the history of theLehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus. Their concert, "The Alec and Judy Affair", on June 10, 2000, will be first in a series of events put on by various organizations during Lehigh Valley Pride Week. The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus will perform at Northampton County Community College's Lipkin Theatre for the first time, with acclaimed female illusionist Tommy Femia as Judy Garland. They will also present the world premier of "Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me." written by Dr. J. A. Kawarsky for the LVGMC. They will record their first compact disc, "Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me," on June 11, 2000. A lot of "firsts" for this small, but growing, ensemble.

Look for more information in future editions of the Valley Free Press about "The Alec and Judy Affair" and check out their web site at www.geocities.com/~lvgaymenschor for up-to-date information and ticket reservation information. The new e-mail address of the Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus is <lvgmc@hotmail.com>.

IMPORTANT JUDY CHICAGO WORK AT ZOELLNER

An important exhibit by world renowned artist Judy Chicago can be seen until June 11, at the Zoellner Art Center at Lehigh University. "Holocaust Project- From Darkness Into Light," is a multimedia exhibit that casts the Holocaust as a reference point to explore contemporary questions about the human condition. Chicago's work includes images of often overlooked victims of the Holocaust. It depicts stories of women, gays, and blacks in Europe during World War II. Chicago herself will speak at Lehigh about this work later this month. For more information call Zoellner Arts Center: 610-758-5322.

THE PRIMARY ELECTION IS APRIL 4 DON'T FORGET TO VOTE

BORDERS UPDATE

VFP editors have continued to follow up on the discrimination incident that happened at Borders Books and Music in January when Travis Simmons was "carded" when he tried to buy the gay teen magazine "XY." We reported that our VFP representative, spoke in person with several Whitehall Borders store managers and clerks who confirmed that this was **not** an isolated incident, but that in fact it was a store policy to card teens when they tried to buy "XY" magazine, because it is a gay magazine and "a parent might object." "XY" is not bagged or tagged with any parental warnings. VFP also reported calling the Borders Corporate offices and getting a confirmation that this could happen, but it should not have, because employees are really only supposed to "card" when material is bagged or tagged. We also reported that the Borders Corporation was not listed with HRC as having an anti-discrimination policy including sexual orientation, nor a domestic partnership policy for same-sex couples.

However...last week VFP received a letter and several positive faxes from Borders. First the Corporate representative of Borders, Margaret Noori, sent Travis a very nice apology and a gift certificate. Ms. Noori also assured VFP editor Liz Bradbury over the phone, and in writing, that the staff at the Whitehall store and the Reading store had been told (reminded) that they are not to card young people unless material is bagged or tagged. Ms. Noori also faxed VFP copies of Borders anti-discrimination statement that includes sexual orientation, and a copy of the company's same-sex couples domestic partnership benefits policy. In turn, VFP provided Borders with the email address of the Human Rights Campaign, so Borders can add itself to the lists of companies that have those policies.

As a result of the faxed information we finally received from Borders, VFP was all set to write that this discrimination problem had been solved. But just a few days ago, VFP got three (second hand) reports from local teens, that the Whitehall Borders had stopped them from buying "XY." VFP felt it was unclear whether these latest incidents had occurred before or after the Borders Corporate Management had told the Whitehall Borders to end the discrimination policy. So we sent in our own "Undercover Investigative Cub Reporter," Joel Mittleman, who is under 15, to try to buy "XY." And VFP editors went along to see exactly what would happen.

We are happy to report that Joel, who was more interested in justice and equality than actually owning the magazine, had no trouble buying "XY" without being carded. To be absolutely sure that no "carding" policy regarding teens buying gay magazines exists in Borders across the country, VFP called Borders in Utah, Kansas, Florida and Connecticut. Each of those stores confirmed they would not card a teen buying "XY" magazine.

Three cheers for Travis Simmons who recognized how discriminatory the policy was, who challenged it by exposing it to the press, and who was responsible for getting it changed! And thanks to Joel too, for confirming that the Borders Corporation has taken responsibility for ending an unfair policy and affirming its commitment to civil rights.

To have The Valley Free Press mailed directly to your home, become a member of PA-GALA.

ANOTHER VIEW
BY WILLIAM FETTERMAN

BOOK REVIEW: Tommy Stands Alone, by Gloria Velásquez (Houston, TX.: Pinata Books, 1995). 135 pages; $7.95

Tommy Stands Alone is the story of a teenaged Latino boy and his struggles with self-acceptance and coming-out. He has begun to date girls in order to go along with his friends, but feels deep down how dishonest that is for him. At home he is the good boy; at school he is a good student. Yet, as he is coming of age, he is beginning to lead a double-life. Who is he? Who is he, really?

At home, and in the Latino community, he is called Tomás. At school, he is usually called Tommy. As time goes on, the fag jokes made by some of his friends result in inner-rage and feelings of hopelessness and despair. Instead of expressing his feelings, and asserting himself, Tommy becomes severely depressed, and begins to drink heavily to numb the pain.

Finally unable to take it any longer, he tries to over-dose on pills and alcohol. Fortunately, his suicide attempt is unsuccessful. In the hospital he meets a therapist named Ms. Martínez, and together they begin to unravel the guilt, shame, and denial--the internalized homophobia--from which Tommy has been suffering.

Yes, Tommy Stands Alone has a happy ending, despite what looks like a depressing story. Accepting one's self as gay--and that there's nothing wrong with being gay--is a definite challenge in our homophobic society. The beauty of this book is the simplicity of the narrative, the realistic situations to which one can relate, and the honest expression of intimate feelings. One of the best examples of Gloria Velásques's writing is the following, when Tommy begins to write honestly about his feelings in a journal:

"Sometimes I really hate myself. And sometimes I wonder who I really am inside. I don't know why God made me this way. It hurts so much being who I am. I don't even know if it's right or wrong. Sometimes I wish so badly that I could change myself, but I know that I can't. I can only be me--Tommy. I can't be anyone else. Why can't my friends understand this? Why can't people love me for who I am? Why can't Dad try to understand me? I wish I could be like everyone else. It hurts so much being who I am. I don't mean to hurt my friends or my family. I just want to be loved for who I am."

This is powerful stuff! I can relate to Tommy very much. In many ways, I was Tommy during my high school years--alone, afraid, very unsure of myself, scared at being gay and wanting to be "like everyone else" and fit in, and numbing the pain with drugs and alcohol. And all the while, I was a good boy at home, and a good student in school.

Although this book was written for teenaged readers, "grown-up" readers can benefit from this story as well. This is a book I wish existed when I was in high school. I could have benefited from the honest, heart-felt insights; I could have used some nonjudgemental guidance from an accepting and trustworthy adult.

We are blessed to live in a time when books such as this exist. I discover that it's never too late to go back and heal some of the traumas involved with growing up, and coming out. As I read about Tommy's anger, sadness, vulnerability, as well as his talent, his joy, and his courage, I've again tapped into many of my own emotions from both my teen years as well as from today. We need more positive, healthy kick-ass books like Tommy Stands Alone. We need more affirmative gay and lesbian models for individual growth. At the end of this book, Tommy no longer is isolated, but begins to find a sense of community. That's what I'm working towards creating. That's what this newspaper is all about.

A VIEW FROM A DYKE
BY LIZ BRADBURY

ONE LESBIAN'S OPINION

In this Primary Election on April 4, every registered Democrat in all of Lehigh and Northampton Counties, can vote for openly gay activist Steve Black, for delegate to the Democratic Convention. We all know that Steve has worked tirelessly for the rights of gay men and lesbians. This is the first time an openly gay candidate for delegate has been tapped to be on the ballot, outside of Philadelphia or Pittsburgh. If Steve is elected, and there is an excellent chance he will be, (especially if we all "bullet vote" only for Steve,and not any other of the four delegate candidates), he will be able to talk to every important Democrat in the country. He will lobby, not only for the rights of GLBT people everywhere, but especially for our rights in the Lehigh Valley.

Steve is running as an Al Gore delegate, but even if you vote for Bradley, you can still vote for Steve. Please do, and get all of your friends to do so. Not only do we want Steve to be elected, we want him to be the top vote-getter of those running. This will show the entire Lehigh Valley the strength of the GLBT vote.

The other race we all (Lehigh Valley Democrats) must pay attention to is the Primary race for Senator. Vote for Allison Swartz. If she wins, she will run against ultra-conservative, anti-gay, far-right, Rick Santorum. Allison Swartz has an excellent record. She even voted against DOMA - the anti same-sex marriage Act.

In other Primary races, most State Representative Candidates are running unopposed. We still need to vote for our allies, Jennifer Mann, T.J. Rooney, Robert Freeman- depending on your district. And there is still important information coming in about the few contested State Representative races, so be sure to check your PA-GALA Candidate Guide carefully when you get it in the mail.

If you're a Republican, well, at least you can vote for Robert E. Smith Jr.(former Allentown City Council member and friend to the GLBT community), for delegate to the Republican Convention. As far as the other candidates for offices go, there are no pro-gay rights Republican candidates running, as far as I can see. Frankly, the election of more Republican State Representatives will only proliferate the kind of anti-gay legislation we have seen coming out of the PA State House in the last year. Certainly the Republican Presidential Candidates have shown their severe anti-gay stands.

Unfortunately, the Knight Amendment won in California. Which means California now has a law that says legal gay marriages from other states (if there ever are any) will not be recognized there. This is depressing, but it reminds us how important voting is, and that we must seek candidates to represent us who will keep this kind of mean-spirited legislation from ever being introduced.

As GLBT individuals we must also be **out** to all the people who love and care about us, so that they will vote to support our rights. The day before the Knight vote, Trish and I sent emails to every single person in our address book. This included my cousin Greg, who is married with three kids and lives in California. He is a relatively conservative guy, who lives in Orange County, which is a notoriously far-right district. But I asked him to vote **no on Knight** anyway. I got an email back from him and it said, "Okey Dokey." And he meant it too.

We will win these rights, even if we have to do it one person at a time. But nobody will help us, even if they love us, if we never ask them to.

"THE ENCOUNTER CULTURE"
BY PATRICIA SULLIVAN

Remember the 60's? Well, at least maybe you've read about it. There was rebellion, there was involvement, it was a time of activism.

But another thing I remember about the 60's was "encounter groups." A small group of people who, guided by a trained facilitator, explored their "feelings." There were college encounter groups, workplace encounter groups, professional association encounter groups. Encounter groups were a place to get in touch with your emotions and challenge your perceptions of...well... you name it.

Yes, and I did it. At the time it seemed like the thing to do. I was shy, and I wanted deeply to better understand myself and my attitudes and prejudices. I wanted to be a better person, to know and be liked by more people. I was sure I was "unique" and that no one really understood how I felt or how I had come to be the person I was.

So one evening I showed up at the community college with seven other enrollees who, as it turned out, also were sure they were unique and that no one really understood how they felt, and who wanted deeply to better understand themselves.

I attended six evening sessions, I actually paid money for this. In the beginning there were superficial attempts at sharing feelings. After the second session the log jam broke and everyone, while acknowledging the other participants pain, went on to tell ever more heart wrenching stories, as though it were a competition. At one point, I remember thinking to myself, "This isn't real. These people must be acting students trying out a personae for some new role in a play." There was the "womanizer" whose wife didn't understand him; the adult child of a dysfunctional family; a young adult trying to accept his homosexuality; an angry young man who felt some conspiracy controlled his life; the college co-ed who was torn between "finding herself" and "finding a rich husband", a mother with "empty-nest" syndrome; and me (it was like a Bob Newhart episode). They all told their stories and the facilitator gently challenged them to "grow" and to "heal, " by telling their stories. And, at the end of the six sessions, the facilitator invited the group to participate in the advanced encounter group. And they did. And they told their stories again even more eloquently. At least that's what I imagined was going to happen. I was done.

I now know <u>everyone</u> has a story that will break your heart. My own story wasn't really any more unique or difficult or special, than the next person. What was ultimately important to me, was what I was going to do with my life experiences that would make a difference.

So I didn't attend the advanced session. I got involved in groups that made change in the community through action. Encounter groups still exist, they just have different lingo, only now they call lingo "speak." And they seem to attract gays because after all, we are still a largely disenfranchised group.

But it seems to me that if you want to get out of your old patterns, it's better to skip spending so much energy talking about them. Sure, if you have serious issues that are ruining your life, seek a good counselor. But I speak from experience when I say, if you want to find the support of friends, go seek some who are doing something constructive rather than rehashing every sad, bad, disturbing thing that ever happened in their life. These are not attractive qualities to anyone. There's a time to move on.

Want to meet people who share your interests, make new friends, learn things, help the community? What could be more positive than that? Call one of the groups listed in the centerfold of the VFP today.

HOW TO BECOME A SUPER-VOTER

Whether or not you have voted in the last five elections, is a matter of public record. Candidates and elected officials have these lists. Whether your opinion counts to an elected official or a candidate is directly related to whether or not you vote. If you are a Super-voter, they will call you, they will come to your door, they will ask you to vote for them, and you can tell them your views. If you never vote, they couldn't care less about your opinion. You can easily become a Super-voter by being registered to vote as a Republican or Democrat and voting in every Primary and General election. Start now.

POP QUIZ

1. According to the Weathergirls, what time does it start raining men?
A. 10pm B.10:30pm C. 11pm D. 1am

2. Which one of the Village People was married to Phylicia Rashad? The....
A. Cowboy B.1st Cop C.2nd Cop D. Indian

3. In a new HBO special, Anne Hecht directs Ellen DeGeneres in love scenes with:
A. Paula Poundstone B. Lea DeLaria
C. Lea Thompson D. Sharon Stone

4. Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman have won the Berlin Film Festival's Best Documentary award for "Paragraph 175", a film about gay holocaust stories. They also directed:
A.The Celluloid Closet B. In and Out
C.Common Threads D. Will & Grace episodes

5. The Holocaust occurred circa 19__ to 19__.
A. 03-11 B. 23-27 C.38-45 D. 52-55

6. Name DC Comics' new gay superhero couple.
A. Batman and Robin B. Titus and Andromedus
C. Flame and Ghost Rider D. Apollo and Midnighter

7. ___ was the first year the United States Census included a category for "unmarried partners."
A. 1970 B. 1980 C.1990 D. 2000

8. When asked about ENDA, who said, "Yes, I'm clearly against discrimination against anyone," but an hour later reversed to "No, I'm anti-special rights," when he realized ENDA protected gays?
A. John McCain B . G.W. Bush
C. Gary Bauer D. Alan Keyes

9. What actor, known to millions as a TV attorney, will be featured (and outed) this month on A&E's Biography?

10. Pennsylvania voters registered as "Independents", ____ vote in Primary Elections.
A. can B. cannot

This month, forms for the U.S. Census will probably be sent to your house. To be counted as a gay or lesbian couple indicate that you are "unmarried partners," even if you are spiritually married. Currently this is the only way the Census will count our families. And in order to establish our existence, **we must be counted!**

1.B 2.B 3.D 4.A+C 5.C 6.C 7.B 8.A 9.Raymond Burr 10.B

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SOME OF THE PRODUCTION COSTS OF THIS ISSUE OF VALLEY FREE PRESS WERE UNDERWRITTEN BY ELIZABETH BRADBURY ANTIQUES

We believe it would improve the quality of lifein the Lehigh Valley if all people were legally protected from unfair discrimination based upon: race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation (actual or perceived), marital status, family status, age, handicap or disability, or use of a guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation. PA-GALA,

Valley Free Press

Allentown Human Relations Commission

GLASS at Lehigh University

Safe-Space at Lehigh University

PFLAG of Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

GLB Student Union at NCC,

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Lucent

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere-Cedar Crest

6th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT (Fighting AIDS Continuously Together)

SAGE at Muhlenberg

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Service Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity-Bethlehem

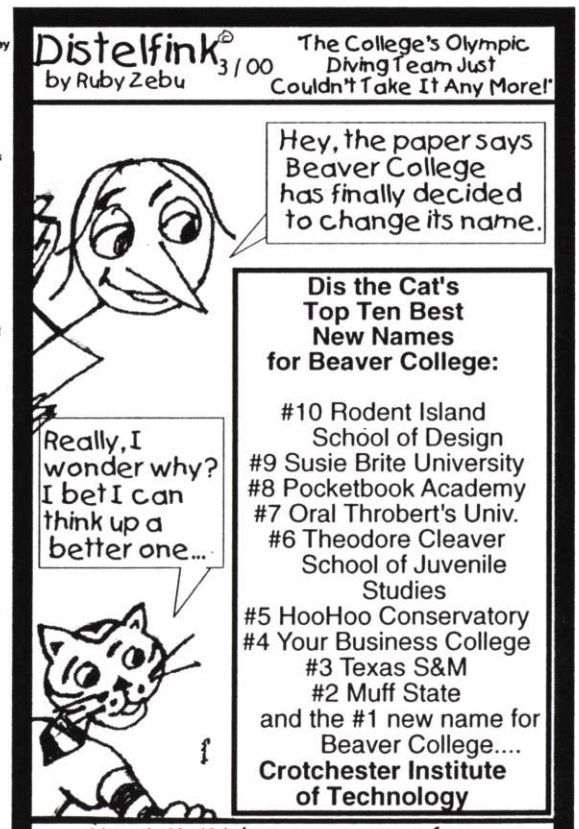
The Lehigh Valley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

VFP will continue to publish the "Honor Roll" of organizations supporting this Anti-discrimination Statement. To add the name of your organization to this list, call (432-5449) or email VFP (liztrish@aol.com).

QUOTE

- Remembering Naziism, ethnic cleansing, and other atrocities "obligates us to seek out within our own communities exclusionary and dehumanizing discourses and practices, aimed at those 'others' who differ from us in religious faith, ethnicity, political view, skin pigmentation or sexual orientation."-

Laurence Silberstein, director of the Philip and Muriel Berman Center for Jewish Studies at Lehigh University, speaking at the demonstration and march against hate and intolerance that was held in conjunction with the exhibits at the Banana Factory and Zoellner Center commemorating Holocaust victims, on March 4. (As quoted in the Morning Call)



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